

VLR-12/10/98 NRHP-1/27/99

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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 160). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classifications, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-903a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Coliseum (1922-28), Duplex Envelop Company Building (928-78)

other names/site number Valentine Auction Company Building (1978-)

2. Location

street & number 1339-1363 West Broad Street — not for publication N/A
city or town Richmond vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Richmond (Independent City) code 760 zip code 23220

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the
National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

X private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

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_x_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

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Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) **N/A**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: auditorium
INDUSTRY manufacturing facility
COMMERCE/TRADE specialty store

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY 20TH CENTURY: Commercial Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETEroof ASPHALTwalls BRICKother TRUSSES: STEELFLOORS: CONCRETENarrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

commercesocial historyreligion

Period of Significance 1922-1948

Significant Dates 19221928
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
Cultural Affiliation
Architect/Builder E. H. Armentrout, Builder (1920-22); Otis Spiers, Architect, and Davis Brothers, Inc., General Contractor (1927).

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .3 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	284010	4158840	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Harding Sadler, AIA with Peter McDearmon Witt, AIA

organization Sadler & Whitehead Architects, PLC date September 1998

street & number 800 West 33rd Street telephone 804-231-5299

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23225

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Coliseum Associates Limited Co.

street & number 1208 West Marshall Street telephone 804-358-7415

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23220

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

Summary Description

At roughly 90,000 square feet, the Duplex Envelope Company Building is one of the largest scale low-rise buildings in downtown's Broad Street Corridor. Fronting on this commercial boulevard, Richmond's primary east-west axis, the three-story mixed-use building, known originally as "The Coliseum," was the City's biggest community hall in the early 1920s. Surpassed in grandeur and in popularity by the Mosque (now the Landmark Theater) and the City Arena (demolished), the building was altered in the late 1920s to accommodate the headquarters of the Duplex Envelope Company and an automobile dealership. What was initially a vast open space was infilled in 1927 with a concrete structure in order to accommodate new commercial and manufacturing purposes, church envelope printing and distribution combined with car sales and service. Stylistically, the building is understated commercial vernacular. The facade of dark red brick is distinguished only by the curved parapet that denoted the central entry. The remaining original storefronts are indicative of the many businesses housed in the commercial tenant spaces that stretched along Broad Street. The windows above, grouped in threes, have their original wood, double-hung sash. The rear of the building, which opens onto an urban alley, is utilitarian. The interiors reflect a similar "no nonsense" approach to building and design. The huge exposed steel trusses of the vast third floor are arguably the building's most striking interior feature.

Architectural Analysis

The original Richmond Coliseum is a massive, three-story red-brick building located on the south side of West Broad Street, on land that was first developed from 1840-1914 by Richmond College between Lombardy and Ryland Streets. The building is a party wall structure flanked by other commercial structures of similar vintage. The five-part industrial style building is centered on axis with Bowe Street, which empties onto Broad Street at its northern terminus. It has thirteen nearly symmetrical bays of tripartite windows (six-over-one sash). The deep-red brick is laid in common bond with deeply raked joints. A continuous cornice unites the storefront level. Granite sills enrich the storefronts on the east side of the building. Some original storefront materials remain. Of particular interest are the fluted returns of several original entry doorways. Multi-light transoms remain in place in the majority of ground floor bays. A roll-up garage door was an early (c. 1930's) interruption of the original entry level configuration. This opening was enlarged to allow the Duplex Envelope Company executives easy parking immediately off Broad Street. The present garage door replaced an older manually operated closure.

The bays on either end of this long building, once Richmond's largest public hall, are accentuated by a simple, curvilinear parapet and likewise the center three bays have an elaborated parapet with limestone coping. Beneath this central parapet is a segmental arched two-story window bay over the ground floor storefront where the original entry (now demolished) was located. Mounted on the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

parapet was a wooden sign which announced the building's use as Coliseum. This sign remained in place until construction of the City's current coliseum in the mid-1960s. Storefronts make up all thirteen bays of the ground level; they are separated by brick piers. An altered marquee at the extreme eastern storefront bay gives entry to the upper levels. Although the original Coliseum entry was at the center storefront, the Duplex Envelope Company added its corporate entry to the east bay c. 1927 when they moved their headquarters from 21st Street to what had become on West Broad, a thriving commercial/industrial center. At the other end of the building an enclosed area was reserved for restaurant use.

March 1927 Building Permit drawings detail the building's change in use from a Coliseum with offices to a mixed-use building whose primary occupants were the Duplex Envelope Company and an automobile dealership. The drawings demonstrate (more specifically than the Sanborne Insurance maps) that the open space dedicated to the Coliseum was the area to the west of the central entry. The drawings show that the original balconies and supporting columns were retained and the open space was infilled with additional columns on the first and second floors to support a complete floor level at the second floor and a totally new floor at the third floor. The building was fitted out with a sprinkler system (a relatively new fire-proofing method) and a ramp which brought cars from the alley to the second floor for storage and servicing. The additional columns and beams enabled tenants to use the western half of the second floor almost as a parking deck. The original, exposed, steel trusses allowed the third floor to continue as clear span space. An article in the *Richmond News Leader* described the plans:

"The old Coliseum, which was at one time the largest hall in the city,...was divided several months ago and the Duplex Envelope Company took over the eastern half...The company now owns the entire building. A long-term lease was recently signed on the first two floors of the western half by the Phelps-Vaughan-Proffit Motor Company, and alterations are now in progress to make over the property.....The walls of the building will not be torn down in this process, but...the building will be completely made over."

The present configuration, finish, and appearance of the building matches the permit documents which effected this pivotal change in the building's use (see attached drawings). It should be noted that the fabric of the original Coliseum use remains in place, augmented by additional interior structure.

The rear of the building, which opens onto the alley between Broad and Grace Streets, is also divided into the thirteen bays of segmental-arched windows grouped in threes. The dark-red brick is laid in six course American bond. There is no parapet; the roof sheds from front to back. The rear is punctuated by overhead garage doors at the ground floor level. The majority of masonry openings are original, however most windows have been replaced with a variety of wooden and steel sash. The rear of the building has a tenement quality and a utilitarian character. The rear faces the backs of a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

row of apartment buildings which date from the same period of construction. The apartment buildings are contributing features in the Fan Historic District. Like the Coliseum, these West Grace Street apartments were developed in the decade that followed Richmond College's move to its Westhampton campus in 1914.

The interior finishes on much of the ground floor evidence the range of tenants who have leased space within the structure throughout its seventy-five year history. An automobile ramp was enclosed along the west side of the building in the 1927 alterations to accommodate a succession of automotive business concerns, including Robertson Chevrolet, Nash, Willys Motors, and Phelps Vaughan. The automobile showroom extended from the center section to the penultimate bay (1345-1361 West Broad). The showroom flooring was black and white terrazzo and portions still remain in space now leased to the Virginia Commonwealth University's Archaeology Department. The second and third floors are primarily open warehouse spaces. A large second-floor office space at the east end of the building, which was the administrative heart of the Duplex Envelope Company, retains its pressed tin ceiling and one of the original vaults. When Duplex Envelope Company occupied the majority of the building, from 1926-1977, the ground floor was used for shipping and warehousing, the second floor was primarily office space, and the third floor was the location of the plant where Duplex's patented machinery printed the church envelopes and distributed them into individual boxes destined for use by church parishioners around the world.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 4

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

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Statement of Significance

The Duplex Envelope Company Building is significant under *Criteria A* for the role the building played in the life of the City of Richmond in recreation, manufacturing, commerce, and religion. Developed by prominent local businessmen Gibson Worsham and Archer Jones as the city's first coliseum, the building was used originally as a skating rink and performance hall. That venture failed early in the building's history and it was converted in the late 1920s into the headquarters of the burgeoning Duplex Envelope Company. A significant portion of the building was set aside as space for an automobile dealership. To this day cars are still stored in the western portion of the second floor. The Duplex Envelope Company, whose first president, Archer Jones, was one of the original developers of the building, occupied the majority of the space from 1927 to 1975. While located in this building, the Duplex Envelope Company grew to become the world's largest manufacturer of church envelopes. Thanks to the dozens of patents acquired by the business Duplex was able to develop and monopolize innovations that helped churches raise unprecedented funds through devices including the original duplex envelope which provided for weekly offerings of two types of benevolences and the boxed sets of envelopes provided for members of church congregations throughout the world.

Historic Context

Originally constructed in 1922 by builder E. H. Armentrout for two civic-minded Richmond businessmen as Richmond's first Coliseum, 1339-1363 W. Broad Street housed the Duplex Envelope Company from 1927-1977. The vast building developed by newspaperman George Gibson Worsham and Duplex Envelope Company's president Archer Jones is significant for its role in the life of the City, for its association with the lives of the two gentlemen responsible for its construction, and as home, for 50 years, of the world's largest manufacturer of church envelopes.

Mssrs. Worsham and Jones formed Standard Amusement Corporation in January 1921 to construct a building for the following purposes:

....to entertain the public by the presentation and operation of skating rinks, moving pictures, theatricals, shows, concerts, pageants, exhibitions and by any and all forms of amusement recognized as legal and wholesome by the laws of the City of Richmond and the State of Virginia.

After the Coliseum was opened, it was used as a roller skating and ice-skating arena. When the circus, or other special events came to Richmond, the performance was held here. The Coliseum Inn, a restaurant, operated at the west end of the building. The building was simply furnished:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 5

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

light-weight wooden folding chairs were used as the primary seating. Wooden-wheeled roller skates were available for rental. Cast iron hooks embedded in the masonry walls anchored nets and trapezes for visiting circus performers. Remnants of original furnishings are still stored by the Worsham family in Mr. Worsham's home in Ginter Park.

It was natural that Worsham and Jones should construct their Coliseum on West Broad Street, a wide boulevard connecting Richmond's principal retail and government corridor. The city's electric street car ran down the center of Broad Street and connected this urban core to Richmond's early suburbs. Broad Street was a regional as well as a local center for commerce and transportation. John Russell Pope's Broad Street Station was completed in 1919 several blocks west of the Coliseum. Then in the early 1920s when the automobile became broadly available as a means of personal transportation, the area between Belvidere and Lombardy was filled with car dealerships and other businesses that supported the driving public. The Coliseum was also built in a time when the city fathers believed in private sponsorship of public facilities. That these wealthy philanthropists should endow fellow Richmonders with a roller skating rink and performance center was entirely in keeping with the times. Only three years after the Coliseum was constructed, the Shriners completed the Acca Temple Mosque, a first class auditorium facility. The City's Arena (recently demolished) was built near by in the same period. Apparently competition with these other new facilities cut into the Coliseum's business. Within a few years of undertaking the development of the Coliseum, Worsham sold his share of the building to Duplex Envelope Company, and Jones hired architect Otis Spiers with Davis Brothers, Inc., General Contractors to re-configure the interior so that it might house an automobile dealership along with his own rapidly expanding church envelope company. Davis Brothers still operates as a prominent minority construction company in the city.

Archer Jones was the Secretary and Treasurer of Standard Amusement Corporation, the entity which established and built the Coliseum. His principal occupation was as president of the Duplex Envelope Company, a business which dominated the international market for church envelopes. Jones lived at 203 W. Franklin Street, at the southwest corner of that street's intersection with Jefferson Street, and adjacent to the City's luxurious Jefferson Hotel (the Jones' home was demolished to create a surface parking lot adjacent to the Junior League). Mr. and Mrs. Archer Jones were known as philanthropists. With Mr. Worsham, they were instrumental in converting the "Old Stone House," erroneously known as "Washington's Headquarters," into a shrine commemorating the life and work of Edgar Allen Poe. Jones also was at the forefront of the effort to erect Richmond's Carillon Tower, a memorial to Virginians who had served in World War I. Archer Jones's father was Dr. T. G. Jones, an early president of Richmond College.

Both Archer Jones and his partner Gibson Worsham suffered personal and professional reverses in the late 1920s. In April 1927 Gibson Worsham's financial straits forced him to sell his share of the Coliseum building. Jones moved his own company, Duplex Envelope Company, Inc., a business established in 1904 which specialized in the manufacture of church envelopes into half of the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 6

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

That company enjoyed unparalleled national success; it held patents on a machine which printed and boxed the envelopes at a speed which could not be matched by its competitors. In December 1927 Duplex Envelope brought suit against a former employee who had taken the trade secrets to another company. Meanwhile, Jones was struggling with his wife's illness. Four days after Jones filed suit against his competitor in envelope manufacturing, his wife fainted and could not be revived. Delirious, Archer Jones killed himself. Ironically, his wife recovered and lived twenty more years. After losing its founders, the Coliseum space was given over in 1928 to an automobile dealership while a majority of the building housed production and sales for the Duplex Envelope Company. A variety of tenants occupied the smaller storefronts on Broad.

Property records indicate that Archer Jones' son Osborne, took over the Duplex Envelope Company after his father's untimely death. The Duplex Envelope Company offices occupied half of the second floor. Manufacturing processes occupied the third floor. The ground floor space included a drive-in entry for company executives, and an area for shipping. The company also opened a cafeteria in the building for its employees. The Coliseum Inn continued on as a tenant for several years after the Coliseum ceased to function as an entertainment center. Some years later this restaurant space, an original concept in the building's development, was leased to the Capri Restaurant, for decades considered Richmond's finest.

After the death of Archer Jones, the company founder, the leadership and workforce of Duplex Envelope was increasingly made up of women. Miss Margaret Rackett, the executive secretary, served the company for more than 40 years. Miss Grace Watts, a Scottish immigrant, came to work for the company at age 20 and ultimately became its president. The majority of the workforce, exclusive of the mechanics was female. Present day employees of the company, which continues to lead the church envelope business as a subsidiary of APG, Inc., recall that the business treated its employees as family. Many worked for the company until retirement. The company continued to expand its market, building on its original concept of instilling universal (rather than focused) church giving. In the mid-1960s Duplex was bought out by paper industry giant Hammermill, which ultimately moved the company and its original machinery to an industrial area near the State Fairgrounds. Those patented machines and methods developed by Duplex in the 1920s and 30s for installation at 1339-63 West Broad Street continue to be used today in the company's present offices.

The national success of the Duplex Envelope Company is emblematic of the heyday of "mainline" churches. As the twentieth century opened the churches mirrored an increasingly settled community. Church building and church missions also began to take on also an identifiable shape. Where previously prominent individuals --leading businessmen and their families in individual congregations-- met most expenses and funded large building projects, the twentieth century saw a process of democratization in church giving. The Duplex Envelope provided the primary vehicle for this revolutionary "Every Member Canvas." Like the secret ballot in a way, each offering no matter the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8,9 Page 7

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

size could be discreetly proffered, lessening the impact of large gifts (and their givers' influence) and opening the way to consensus planning.

The contribution of Archer Jones and his successors was the invention of an envelope which allowed two separate benevolences to be placed in a single envelope, hence "duplex." In addition to weekly tithing, special missions and building projects could be solicited simply and without special effort. From its inception, the company was the largest manufacturer of church envelopes, as it continues to this day as a subsidiary of APG, Inc. It is arguable that the "Duplex Envelope" was the engine for the observable social and civic expansion of the "mainline" churches throughout the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. The Duplex envelope concept, in combination with the company's theory of "the every member canvas" enabled church congregations to pool their wealth, thus allowing an increasingly democratic face to emerge for church missions. It is hard not to credit Duplex Envelope with this sociologic phenomenon, since it developed and has sustained the market for church envelopes for nearly a century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Archer Jones Dies; Overcome by Gas in Home." *Richmond News Leader*. 21 December 1926, p.1.

Brownell, Charles E., Calder Loth, and Richard Guy Wilson. The Making of Virginia Architecture. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1992.

Charter Book 82, State Corporation Commission, pp. 248-249.

Charter Book 114, State Corporation Commission, p. 211.

Dabney, Virginia. Richmond, the Story of a City. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.

"Half of Coliseum Sold by Worsham." *Richmond News Leader*. 14 April 1927, p. 1.

McGraw, Marie Tyler. At the Falls, Richmond, Virginia, & Its People. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

Personal interview with John G. Worsham, May 8, 1998.

Personal interviews with Theola L. Jordan, Division Controller, APG, Inc., 8 and 10 June 1998.

Personal interviews with Billy Jean Chick, APG, Inc., June 8, 1998.

Telephone interview with Gibson Worsham, AIA, May 8, 1998.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 8

**Duplex Envelope Company Building
Richmond, Virginia**

UTM REFERENCES

	zone	easting	northing
A.	18	284010	4158840

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of that property designated by the City of Richmond as parcel number W000-0615/006.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the perimeter of the Duplex Envelope Company building, which occupies the entire site.

GTM -

Coliseum Bldg
1339-1363 W. BROAD

18 284010 4158840



32'30"

